

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 30

JULY 29-AUG. 4

All WCW Show Dip From Last Year

WWF CABLE SERIES TAKE TOP TWO RATINGS SLOTS FOR SECOND QUARTER

For the first time since the A.C. Nielsen Co. began measuring cable networks, the World Wrestling Federation's two USA Network series captured the top two ratings spots for a quarterly measurement period. Though every cable mat show posted a usual spring dropoff, **PRIME TIME WRESTLING** (2.6) and **ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING** (2.5) nosed out the three TBS/WCW weekly efforts in the second quarter.

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

TV GUIDE FOCUSES ON STEROID ISSUE

RADNOR PA---In its July 27 issue, *TV GUIDE* quotes a top wrestling editor as challenging the World Wrestling Federation's announced steroid testing plans.

In the weekly *TV NEWS UPDATE* section, writer Herma Rosenthal quotes *WRESTLING RINGSIDE* managing editor Michael Benson: "I'd call it damage control and I'm skeptical about their sincerity. After all, they are in the wrestling business, which has a lot of carnival aspects."

Hasbro Industries' Wayne Charness told Rosenthal: "At this point, we have not seen an effect on sales (of wrestling toys). We're certainly sensitive to (the issue)." But Charness said Hasbro has no plans to pull WWF action figures off the market.

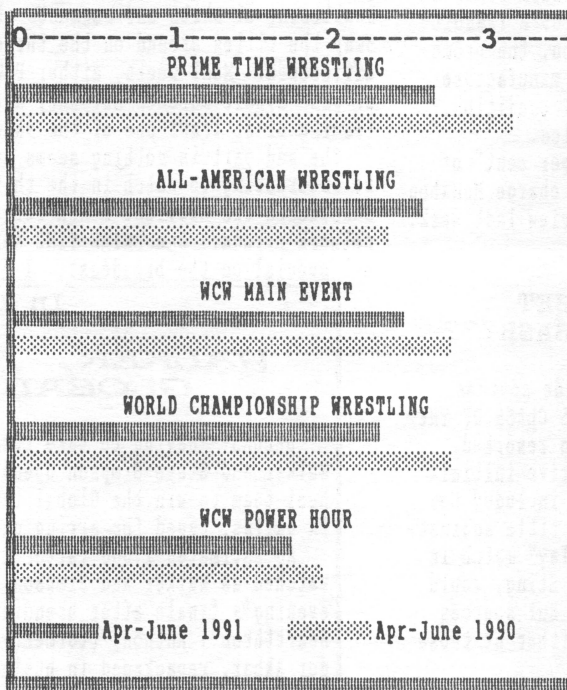
Benson went on to predict the overall impact on the wrestling business will be minimal.

PETRIK WANTS CHANGES IN WCW PRODUCT

ATLANTA---World Championship Wrestling president Jack Petrik has issued a directive to "get back to wrestling," in the WCW product, *MATWATCH* has learned.

Petrik is said to be dissatisfied with the recent decline in WCW TV ratings (though last week's numbers increased) and the payable figures and creative quality of the **GREAT AMERICAN BASH** spectacular.

In a Thursday meeting at CNN Center with high-ranking WCW and TBS officials, Petrik



While PTW fell from its 3.1 April-June average of 1990 to 2.6, the reformatted studio-audience series edged out its Sunday sister show, **ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING** (2.5), the only cable program to register a year-to-year gain.

All three WCW/TBS shows dropped from year-ago audience levels but none took as big a dip as TBS' one-time flagship, **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING**. The Saturday show dropped from last year's 2.7 to its lowest-ever quarterly average, a 2.2. **WCW MAIN EVENT** sank from a second-quarter 1990 mark of 2.7 to a 2.4 this year.

Ironically, **WCW POWER HOUR**, which switched to the lesser-viewed Satur-

day morning slot from its original Friday prime time period, only fell to a 1.6 just two-tenths below its nighttime mark a year ago.

For the first time ever, either **PRIME TIME** or **ALL-AMERICAN** led or tied for the top spot every week during the quarter. The only WCW weekly leadership came during the week ending April 30 when **MAIN EVENT** tied **ALL-AMERICAN** at 2.7. The slippage in **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP** led to the one-time top-rated show in all of cable TV dipping to a 2.0 or below five times during the quarter, a record low.

Analyzing the numbers, some standard excuses can be found for the four shows which fell: 1) an earlier spring during the quarter sent a lot of viewers outside weekends and, true, ratings for Saturday and Sunday conventional sports were down from last year's second quarter. Yet, **ALL-AMERICAN**'s showed a gain; 2) time period changes. Only **PRIME TIME**'s move to Tuesday was affected and in mid-May, opposite strong network sweeps competition, PTW fell to a 2.2 two consecutive weeks but bounced right back to win four of the last five weeks of the quarter; 3) poor lead-ins. That's the constant excuse we hear at WCW of how **FISHIN' WITH ORLANDO WILSON**, which often draws under a 1.0, kills the Saturday night show's numbers. That's baloney. First, fishing shows have been seasonal lead-ins for WCW for eight years now and the ratings never dropped this far for a quarter. Second, **WILSON** was the lead-in last year when WCW twice topped a 4.

MATWATCH

Page 2

Vol. 4, No. 30/July 29-Aug. 4

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

PETRIK (Continued from Page 1)

reportedly warned the promotion's fortunes "have to be turned around," and fast.

MATWATCH will examine the WCW situation further next week.

GRAHAM NEWS CONFERENCE NOW SET AUGUST 21

NEW YORK---Former WWF world champion Superstar Billy Graham has moved a scheduled Aug. 5 news conference to Aug. 21.

Slated for Philadelphia, Graham reportedly intends to announce plans for a lawsuit against WWF owner Vince McMahon, the promotion and at least one steroid manufacturer for his deteriorating physical condition, attributed to abuse of anabolics.

Graham contends "90 to 95 per cent" of WWF wrestlers use steroids, a charge McMahon dismissed in a TV GUIDE interview last week.

LUGER-ZENK SET FOR SEPTEMBER BASH???

ATLANTA---According to inside sources, the first draft of the Sept. 5 CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS card on TBS is being reworked.

MATWATCH has learned tentative initial plans for the Augusta GA show included Lex Luger defending the WCW world title against Tom Zenk and a "Georgia Red Clay" match in which 10 wrestlers, including Sting, would battle royal from a mudbath. But sources tell us chances are strong neither of those will make air.

Two matches expected to go: the Enforcers would meet Rick Steiner and Bill Kaszmeier in the finals of the WCW world tag tourney; and Dustin Rhodes and Bobby Eaton vs. Steve Austin and Terrence Taylor.

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STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 1)

Several keys are clear for the declines, from this vantage point: 1) oversaturation continues to be the big problem. There simply isn't enough original material with this many TV shows (added to the independents and syndicated fare) for viewers not to weary of watching so much. A high-level TV executive asked my view two weeks ago on why the ratings had dipped so low. I said, "The characters have become so bizarre, so many matches and angles are constantly repeated and the overall quality of wrestling has declined so much." Add to that, the fact that viewers are becoming sophisticated enough to realize when they see storylines and characters which are nothing but retreads of the past; 2) too much hardsell: I continue to hear more and more viewers tell me they're tired of constant hyping and harping on pay-per-view shows, 900 numbers and products. So much focus is placed on selling big-ticket events, most shows are no longer fun to watch; 3) this country is wrestling-weary. I haven't seen a show lately which doesn't seem like "just another show." The primary reason PRIME TIME stays on top is while most weeks the quality of the humor and skits is in very poor taste, it is at least packaged in a different fashion. Have you considered the fact that most of WCW's shows are interchangeable? When the POWER HOUR first began, it was a "different" show with only three matches in a natural progression from a prelim to a midcard to a true main event. In between were a scattering of skits and segments which were unique to that show. But you can swap the titles around on the three Turner cable shows and no one could tell the difference. Most weeks, either POWER HOUR or MAIN EVENT are now mostly repeats of past syndie matches but they aren't packaged in an original fashion. The framing of at least one of the shows needs an overhaul.

The sad part is nothing seems out there on the horizon as a boost. What will be interesting to watch in the third quarter is the August ratings. August is considered the heaviest month for cable sampling because of the heavy diet of network reruns. One PRIME TIME show scored a 4.1 last August with nothing at all special on the broadcast. I don't buy it happening again...but stay tuned.

In Dallas Finals

WALKER, SIMPSON CAPTURE GLOBAL TAG TOURNEY

DALLAS---Having to take two matches in the round-robin finals, Chris Walker and Steve Simpson upended both halves of the newly-christened Cartel heel team to win the Global tag team championship tournament Saturday night in Dallas, taped for airing on ESPN the weeks of Aug. 5 and 12.

An estimated 1,000 (after 1,100 appeared for Friday's first two rounds) watched as Walker and Simpson defeated Makham Singh and Cactus Jack in the evening's finale after upending Rip Rogers and Scott ("The Palm Beach Heartthrob") Anthony (formerly Scotty the Body). The Cartel's "boss," Skandor Akbar, repackaged in business suit as an oil baron, will be introduced in two weeks at the taping of Global's North American title tourney.

A highlight of the evening came during a second round match. After winning in the first round, Stan Lane and Steve Cox were defeated when Jim Cornette and Lane crossed signals with Cox and caused the loss. Cornette and Lane proceeded to work over Cox, drawing some of the major heat of the show.

In a GWF MAJOR LEAGUE syndie taping, Global offered its first run-in, during a match of The Patriot (Del Wilkes) vs. Cactus Jack. Three Cartel members began to pummel the Patriot and a fourth tried to remove his mask. Terry Garvin, The Handsome Stranger (Fabian), Walker and Simpson appeared for the save and a six-minute brawl erupted.

GLOBAL NOTES: Japanese magazine photographer Jimmy Suzuki was covering the tag tourney....WCW MAGAZINE senior editorial consultant Dennis A. Brent appeared at the Friday matches....No decision yet on who the Global champion will be to meet the North American champ at the LPWA/GWF pay-per-view in October....Global's first two weeks scored an 0.9 average (559,000 homes) on ESPN, up from the 0.6 of USWA.

MATWATCH

Page 3
Vol. 4, No. 30/July 29-Aug. 4

IDIOTS

July 22-28

(PORTLAND) - [2 Wks. Ago]:

Bart Sawyer d. Grappler on reversal when Mike Miller tells ref C.W. Bergstrom Grap used trunks to win; (ANGLE) Dirty White Boy ambushes Miller, who rallies until Grappler powders him. Heels work over Miller w. 2x4 until Demolition Crush/Steve Doll save; (DOUBLE BLINDFOLD MATCH) Al Madril d. Sandy Barr by DQ when Al hurls self over top rope; (PIESTA GARDEN) Barr challenges Al to strap match. Al says yes if blindfolded. Barr slaps Al; John Rambo d. DNB; (PACIFIC NW TAG TITLE) Bruise Bros. double countout vs. Crush/Doll to retain belts. Crush chairs Don Harris in back; Larry Oliver vs. Doug Masters in progress as show ends. POWERSLAM. [Last Week]: Sawyer/Mike Winner d. Bull Ramos/Grappler 2-3 falls when Miller pushes Grap off top rope; (ANGLE) Miller chases Grap w. 2x4 during interview; (DOUBLE BLINDFOLD STRAP MATCH) Barr d. Madril when Sandy uses iron bar brought in by Masters to try to frame Sandy. Al/Masters work over Barr until J.J. Funk chases heels w. bullrope; (ANGLE) Al challenges Barr to father-and-son tag match next week; (PNW TAG TITLE/CAGE) Bruise Bros. vs. Crush/Doll (2 min. airs). POWERSLAM.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Virgil d. Paul Roma; (UPDATE) Invitation to Randy/Liz wedding; Nasty Boys d. Rob Allen/Scott Carlson; (GUEST) I.R. Schyster grills pregnant woman in audience & grills her on taxes; (REPLAY) Sid Justice says he won't be in anybody's corps at SUMMER SLAM; (VIDEO) Skinner w. dead squirrel; (GUEST) Bret Hart views clips of self & Curt Hennig; Jim Duggan d. Ed Moretti; (S. SLAM REPORT); Bushwhackers d. Haku/Barbarian when Barb kicks Haku w. loaded boot; Berserker d. Jimmy Snuka; Ricky Steamboat d. Lou Spiccoli; Beverly Bros. d. Bobby Jones/Chi Chi Cruz; Kerry Von Erich d. Vern Seibert; (ANGLE) Hidden cam follows Natural Disasters to training site. Earthquake attacks cameraman as show ends. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: I.R. Schyster d. Bobby Jones; Jim Duggan d. Ed Moretti; (VIDEO) Skinner w. squirrel; Nasty Boys d. Dave Saxon/Bob Jewell; Big Bossman d. Mike Steele; Beverlys d. Bob Johnson/Butch Thomas; (SUMMER SLAM REPORT); (FUNERAL PARLOR) Paul Bearer w. Jake Roberts. RESTHOLD. [SUPERSTARS]: Von Erich d. Siebert; (UPDATE) Justice-Slaughter; Berserker d. Chi Chi Cruz; Hart d. Thomas; Warlord d. Larry Williams; Bushwhackers d. Mike Starr/Bob Bradley; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Percy w. Jake; Mountie d. Steve May. RESTHOLD.

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Mon./TV Finals]: Patriot d. Chris Walker; Patriot d. Buddy Landell to win belt. (LT. HWT. TOURNEY) Chaz d. Ed Robinson; Lightning Kid d. Bubba Fangman; Rip Rogers d. Ray Evans; Handsome Stranger d. Butch Blackheart; (NEWS CENTER) Joe Pedicino on Patriot, Savage/Liz wedding. RESTHOLD. [Tue./Lt. Hwt. Tourney]: Steve Simpson d. Mike Stetson; Adrian Street d. Iceman Parsons by DQ; Brian Adias d. El Bandleero; Mike Davis d. Victor Gonzales; (NC) Joe on over-top not DQ in GWF, 20-count outside ring, S. Steiner injury. RESTHOLD. [Wed./Lt. Hwt. Tourney]: Jerry Lynn d. Randy Rhodes in 5 sec.; Terry Daniels d. Rick Gerren; Terry Garvin d. Kenny the Stinger; John Tatum d. Khri Germany; (NC) Joe on tag team tourney; (REPLAY) L. Kid d. Fangman. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(LPWA) - (RECAP SHOW): Alma Alvarez d. Denise Storm; Bambi/Malaya Hosaka d. Nasty Girls; (NON-TITLE) Reggie Bennett d. Lady X; Queen's Court d. Susan Sexton/The Beast; Terri Power d. Black Venus by DQ when Bugaloo Brown runs in; (LOUISVILLE SLUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Queen's Court. DRAW-PLUS.

(GLOBAL) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: Bill Irwin d. Khri Germany; Street d. Bandleero; Big Bully Busich d. Evans; Makham Singh/Rogers d. Adias/Gary Young; Lightning Kid d. Dapper Dan; (CLIPS) Lt. hwt. tourney; Patriot d. John Tatum. DRAW.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - Chic Donovan d. Moose Mahoney; (LPWA) Power d. Rusty Thomas; (CLASSIC/AWA) Midnight Rockers d. Adrian Adonis/Bob Orton Jr.; Mike Servich/Fabian d. The Flies; (JAPAN) Antonio Inoki/Masa Saito d. Williams/Brown; Busich d. Tim Strong. RESTHOLD.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - Bruiser Brody double DQ vs. Jerry Blackwell; Steve Regal d. Buck Zumhofe; (VIDEO) AWA Ladies of the '80s; (6-MAN) Midnight Rockers/Curt Hennig d. Buddy Rose/Doug Sommers/Alexis Smirnoff. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(INCCW) - Curly Moe d. Boss Hogg; (PWI PRESS CONF.) Bill Apter w. Dory Funk Jr.; Tony Atlas/Scott Putski d. Power Twins; (VIDEO) Billion \$ Babies; (REPLAY/INCCW TAG TITLE) Babies d. Undertakers to win belts when Kevin Casey uses golf club on 'Takers; Atlas no decision vs. Ivan Putski when ref down. Scott Putski saves. BOMB-PLUS.

(SUNCOAST PRO) - Lou Perez d. Poison Ivy; Frankie Reyes d. Penelope Paradise; (ANGLE) Masked Superstar/Paradise ambush Reyes and ref Boris Malenko but faces clear ring; Cody Wayne vs. Vern Henderson in progress as show ends. NO RATING.

(USWA/WMC) - (VIDEO) Jeff Jarrett/Robert Fuller in "Walkin' in Memphis;" Jarrett d. Leatherface when Barroom Brawlers run in & triple stuff piledrive Jeff. Jerry Lawler/Bill Dundee/Danny Davis save; (PIPKIN BLDG) Tony Anthony d. Tom Prichard by DQ when Eric Embry/Tojo Yamamoto run in & Tojo decks ref Paul (Heyman Sr.) Neighbors; (ANGLE) Tony Anthony asks Kim Anthony to marry him & she says yes (where have I heard that one?); (ANGLE) Prichard/Embry/Miss Texas/Tojo ambush Anthonyms. Eddie Marlin/Heyman Sr./Dundee save & trash cans start flying; (PIPKIN) Jarrett/Fuller vs. Barroom Brawlers; Brawlers d. Davis/T.D. Steel by DQ when Jarrett runs in w. 2x8; Awesome Kong d. Freezer Thompson; (PIPKIN) Tojo attacks Neighbors; (ANGLE) Reggie B. Fine taunts Lawler, the two brawl in ring, Lawler dodges Awesome Kong, who splashes Reggie; Dundee/Lawler double countout vs. Prichard/Embry. 1st fall no contest when Anthonyms/Cousin Harold brawl outside w. Tojo/Miss TX. POWERSLAM.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: P.N. News d. John Peterson; (From WCW) Steve Austin-Johnny B. Badd skirmish over Jeannie Clarke; Austin d. Keno MacKenzie; Ron Simmons d. Bob Cook; (WNN) Gordon Solie on Hardliners-Steiners saga; Hardliners d. Sonny Trout/Chris Sullivan; Curtis Hughes d. Scott Allen; Diamond Studd d. Rick Ryder. BOMB-PLUS.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: P.N.N. d. Brian Carr; (SEG) Alexandra York mum to Paul E. on price Lex Luger paid for Hughes or next Foundation member; Enforcers d. Ian Weston/Sonny Trout; (CONTROL CENTER) Solie on tourneys, Terrence Taylor-Badd preview, Bill Kaszmeier demo; Yellow Dog d. Studd but Tom Zenk puts towel over Dog's head when Studd unmasks him; Dustin Rhodes d. Black Bart; Big Josh d. Tony Mello; (WCW WORLD TAG TOURNEY) Freebirds double countout vs. Hardliners. Both eliminated; Tommy Rich/Junkyard Dog d. Chuck Coates/Bob Cook & during bout, Richard Morton whispers to Rich; Morton d. David Taylor;

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Mid-scale rating.

MATWATCH

Page 4

Vol. 4, No. 30/July 29-Aug. 4

(FINAL U.S. TOURNEY BERTH) Badd d. T. Taylor. RESTHOLD-PLUS. [MAIN EVENT]: P.N.W. d. Paul Lee; (ELIMINATION MATCH) Freebirds vs. Young Pistols: 1) Garvin pinned. 2) Armstrong (DQ) for tossing Hayes over top. 3) Hayes d. Smothers to win match when Bradstreet runs in & DDTs Tracy; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. on Yellow Dog; Hardliners d. Ryder/Sam Houston; Ron Simmons d. Studd by pinning Dallas Page when he runs in. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: Nikita Koloff d. Joe Bruce; El Gigante d. Lou Fabiano; Big Josh d. One-Man Gang by DQ when Kevin Sullivan runs in. Josh bashes both until Kevin trips him up & Gang 747s Josh twice; (DEMO) Kaszmeier/Joey Maggs w. weights; Pvt. Todd Champion d. Cook; (LARRY'S LEGENDS) Luger/Harley Race/Hughes; Morton d. Chris Sullivan but Rhodes chases Ricky; (WCW TV TITLE) Austin draw vs. Yellow Dog. Studd runs in after & pulls off mask but Zenk saves. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(IWF) - Bad Boys d. Dennis Allen/Terry Davis; Chubby MoCool d. Repo Man on DQ; Terminator double countout vs. Master Blaster; Incredible Thor d. Nuclear Assassin; Dynamite Express d. Rick Diamond/Tom Sawyer; (ANGLE) Thunder & Lightning demand tag title shot & get bashed w. belts by Hearbreakers; Cliff Anderson d. Mike DeBacco; (ANGLE) Cliff, Lou Perez skirmish. RESTHOLD.

(WVEU/SUPERSTARS) - Brute Force & Barbie cover Boni Blackstone & Samuel P. Kent w. big banner & declare hostile takeover of the show. NO RATING.



1. Scott Hudson, GWF-E: "Craig, you have a bedroom suite that goes back to Louis XIV. Rip Rogers has a refrigerator that goes back to Sears on the 18th." 2. Makham Singh, GWF-E: "Pedicino, I'd like to get a big long pin and stick it in you and let you buzz around the room to let out all the hot air."

3. Sean Mooney, PTW, on Nat. Disasters: "We secretly switched their coffee to Folger's." 4. Bobby Heenan, PTW, on Mooney: "I thought McMahon was trouble." 5. Jim Ross, PH: "The championship committee belongs in the Shady Rest rocking." 6. Roddy Piper, WWF-SU, on Warlord: "All he needs is a mask and we've got Jason." 7. Heenan, PTW, on Skinner's squirrel: "Obviously not on the menu of a 5-star restaurant." 8. Hudson, GWF-E: "He wasn't going to grow up to be an evangelist or social worker with a name like Blackheart." 9. Craig Johnson, GWF-E: "Lightning Kid was personally trained by Deney Terrio of DANCE FEVER fame." 10. Jerry Lawler, WMC: "Reggie B. Fine looks like somebody who's gonna o.g. (overgold) any minute."

11. Hudson, GWF-E, on Steve Simpson: "South Africa's most popular export since gold." 12. Randy Savage, WWF-SU: "Ultimate Warrior's never been Mr. Personality in my book." 13. Piper/Vince McMahon, WWF-SU: (V) "How would Slick look in a Roddy Piper T-shirt?" (RP) "I don't think they make 'em that small." 14. Johnson/Hudson, GWF-E, on Randy Rhodes: (CJ) "226 pounds???" (SH) "I think he means kilos." 15. Eddie Mansfield, IWF: "Champagne Kane guards those belts like he would a girl friend." 16. McMahon, WWF-SU: "In my view---humble as it may be." 17. Terry, caller, JIM ROSS SHOW: "The reason Randy Savage had to quit rasslin' was to get off steroids so he and Elizabeth can have some children."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Steven DeTruth, WVEU: "Thanks, Jim (Herd) and Dusty, for turning the greatest wrestler of the

past 20 years into a performing monkey act. And thanks for turning the whole promotion, for that matter, into something that looks like the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles at Howdy Doodly Time." 2. DeTruth, WVEU: "The bonehead matchmakers at WCW still don't have a clue as to what's going on or how to run a promotion. Dawning of a new era? HA! Try dawning of a new ERROR!" 3. Hudson, WVEU, on M. Hyatt: "The Dog-Faced Gremlin and her partner, Rick Steiner." 4. Bret Hart, PTW, on Hart vs. Hennig: "It's the two best wrestlers in the WWF." 5. Arn Anderson, WCW: "I'm tired of covering everybody else's butt." 6. Ross, JRS: "It's hypocritical to say there's a steroid problem in the WWF and not in WCW or the NFL or baseball."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. DeTruth, WVEU, on GLOBAL: "Why do we have to put up with third-rate announcers like Craig Johnson and Scott 'Mr. ESPN' Hudson when more talented announcers like Wailin' Ed Whelan are available?" 2. Heenan, PTW, to Mary Pat Mooney: (BH) "How many kids does your mom have?" (MPM) "Five." (BH) "Oh, one of each?" 3. Joe Pedicino, GWF-E, on Liz Poffo: "Will we know her as Ms. Macho?" 4. Paul E. Dangerously, PH: "When M.C. Hammer does a concert, does he go out and beat people up like P.N. News?" 5. Ross, PH: "Who'd want to be a Studdette, anyway?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. TEXAS TOMATO (DeTruth on Joel Deaton). 2. MR. ESPN (DeTruth on Hudson). 3. METER READER FROM MARIETTA (Heenan on Bossman). 4. THE KNUTE ROCKNE OF THE WWF (Savage on Fuji). 5. LORD POMPOUSNESS (Ross on Luger).

SOLIEISM OF THE WEEK - Hudson, GWF-E: "He had the right hand on the obcipital bone."

BEST PICTURES - 1. GWF-E, Singh pulling Johnson's tie. 2. PTW, Reverse angle of Steamboat's cross body block. 3. GWF-E, Closeup of Lightning Kid dropkick on Fangman. 4. IWF, Mondo Kleen ring entrance. 5. WMC, Both studio brawls. 6. SUNCOAST PRO, Paradise/Superstar vs. Malenko/Reyes brawl. 7. WWF-SU, Andre's knee. 8. WWF-SU, Butch Miller licking Andre. 9. WCW, Hayes eye-gouging Murdoch. 10. WCW PRO, Yellow Dog unmasked.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Hudson, GWF-E: "Would you buy a used car from that guy?" 2. Michael St. John, WMC: "...adding insult to injury." 3. Randy Savage, WWF-SU: "birds of a feather flock together." 4. Eric Bischoff, WCW PRO: "...all she wrote." 5. Bischoff, WCW PRO: "...it's not over 'til it's over." 6. Bischoff, WCW PRO: "...too close to call."

SEXIST AWARD - Heenan, PTW, on Mooney's sister: "She dials 900 numbers: 1-900-SAILOR."

ENGLISH LESSONS - 1. Robert Fuller, WMC: "You may not be the toughest team we've ever WENT against." 2. Harley Race, WCW PRO: "The pieces of the puzzle have FELL together."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - GWF-E: Hand-held camera goes out of focus on Stranger match.

BEST PRODUCTION - WMC, "Walkin' in Memphis" video.

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. Cliff Anderson, IWF: "I'm the world TV champion. Learn to live it, uh, love it." 2. Piper, WWF-SU: "The Natural DIE-sasters."

BOO AWARDS - 1. Heenan, PTW, asking Mooney: "Who picked that tie out for you, Stevie Wonder?" 2. PTW, for I.R.S. grilling pregnant woman. In the worst possible taste. 3. WCW, for that Simmons-Studd finish on MAIN EVENT.

HULKLESS AGAIN: Hulk Hogan will be taking some more time off except for special shows after SUMMER SLAM, leaving the Ultimate Warrior to carry the load again.

FLAIRWATCH: While people close to Ric Flair keep insisting he's going to open a fitness center near Charlotte, work Japan and indies, others close to the situation expect to see him either at SUMMER SLAM or in Titan by September. If Vince had the guts, he'd bring him in as the NWA world champion to goad Hogan while Hulk takes his time off.

BACKTRACKING: Titan will revert to one show a night in the fall as a result of declining crowds. Some Hogan-Slaughter bouts have drawn 30-40% fewer than the same period last year.

HEAD-ON BY THE BAY: WWF drew 5,500 at the Cow Palace Friday night with an estimated 3,500 for WCW at the Oakland Coliseum.

NO-SHOW CITY: Among the missing from the WWF San Fran show: Roddy Piper and Curt Hennig (whom Titan knew for a month would not be there), Warlord and Greg Valentine (pulled for a Las Vegas show). For WCW: Kevin Sullivan and Blackblood were no-shows. Rick Steiner was pulled for an elbow injury but the crowd wasn't told and no one was told the Paul E.-Missy match was scratched.

STEROID YELLS: We were told the WWF show was perfectly awful, particularly Hogan-Slaughter, and the crowd started yelling "steroids, steroids" during Shane Douglas-Barbarian.

OTHER GRIPES: Reports were WCW still put on a reasonably good show but the crowd was furious than a billed 8-man elimination match turned out to be a one-fall affair. Lots of "steroids" and "We Want Flair" yells during a Lex Luger-Bobby Eaton match. It was a mid-card bout and non-title, at that. Is that any way to get over your new world champion?

STEINERS RETAIN IWGP BELTS: The Steiners will not be stripped of the Japan version of the world tag title and there is precedent for it. Road Warriors won those belts in '86 and did not defend them for more than a year. If Scott is back by STARRCADE, bet on them to regain the WCW belts that night.

ROCKIN' REGGIE: Speaking of Japan, LPWA's Reggie Bennett has been over big there. She's done a soft drink commercial and appeared on the top TV talk show. In large part, she's outpulled LPWA title heir-apparent Terri Power in popularity.

EL & BRIAN: El Gigante & Brian Pillman (no Yellow Dog) are headed for some New Japan dates at the end of the week.

WCW IN L.A.: An estimated 3,000 were in the Forum (1,600 paid, \$25,000) last Tuesday. But figure these out: Barry Windham was still playing the heel as he pinned Yellow Dog, Johnny B. Badd drew with Steve Austin in a TV title match (and their angle hasn't even come to full fruition on TV) and the Luger-Eaton non-title was the fourth match of nine. Still, West Coast correspondent Chris Crosby termed it a "pretty good" show, much better than the last time in.

BACK IN SEPTEMBER: WCW announced a Sept. "Fall Brawl" L.A. date with Luger defending the world belt against Ron Simmons.

HALLOWEEN HINTS: Early gab is Simmons will get the HALLOWEEN HAVOC shot at Luger with talk of switching the title in Chattanooga is groundless. Some insiders feel it would bring blacks back to arenas. Ron deserves a singles belt but I say ticket prices are more the cause of minorities staying home.

OTHER L.A. NOTES: Cable Radio Network carried the audio play-by-play for the WCW show...but souvenir programs sold for \$4 on one side of the arena and \$2 on the other.

WESTERN WOES: Elsewhere, WCW drew less than 1,000 paid in San Diego and had to cancel the San Bernadino show after an advance of fewer than 100 tickets.

PULLOUTS: Jim Brunzell withdrew from the Global tag tourney because of date conflicts. Iceman Parsons and Billy Joe Travis (skedded to team with Stan Lane) no-showed.

BUSICH SIGNS: Bad News Brown teamed with Nick Busich at the Global tourney. It was Busich's last GWF event. He has signed a 2-year Titan deal as his Big Bully character and debuted at WWF TV Monday night.

XEROX CITY: I can't believe the audacity of the USWA Memphis show ripping off the WWF Saturday. Tony Anthony & wife Kim came out and Tony said, "I've been trying to get my life turned around. I've been living with Kim for four years and I just want to say, Kim, will you marry me?" She said yes but it was a far cry from the Randy/Liz proposal. One guy in the studio yelled, "Who do you think you are, Randy Savage?"

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Jerry Lawler gave Awesome Kong a USWA title rematch with the stip Lawler won all of Reggie B. Pine's gold if Kong loses. In a six-person tag, the Anthonys and "Cousin Harold" (a Mighty Wilbur type) faced Eric Embry/Tom Prichard/Miss Texas. Eddie Marlin was to ref but withdrew.

ALSO MONDAY: In a no-ref cage match, with losers to split, Jeff Jarrett and Robert Fuller took on the Barroom Brawlers. Ref Paul Neighbors faced Tojo Yamamoto, Bill Dundee vs. Randy Harris and Danny Davis vs. Leatherface (Brian Lee).

MAGAZINE DEBUT: The new WCW MAGAZINE, handled by G.C. London Publishing Co. (the PWI folks), is an all-color 68-pager. I've previewed it and it's the equal of the WWF mag with only the type size of the Letters section a bit small to read. It retains most elements of WRESTLING WRAPUP but appears geared to a younger audience than most of the Apter/Peters mags.

EDDIE'S COMING BACK: Eddie Gilbert was expected to get a WCW start date this week. But we're told he's going to be "tested" because he probably won't get a big push early on.

CENTER STAGE FIGHT: A quiet battle between Global and WCW over the Atlanta building ended with WCW agreeing to a 2-year deal for 22 annual dates at a reported \$5,500 per month, a \$1,500 increase per taping. Joe Pedicino had sought the building for a Globaldome-East.

ANOTHER ONE: Yet another Florida group, CWF, has an Aug. 22 card booked in Tampa with Tex Salenger vs. Masked Superstar on top at the American Legion Post 139.

NEXT WEEK: Your MATWATCH may arrive early. I'm headed to my 20-year high school reunion Friday in Georgia so we publish Thursday and mail Friday. VIDIOTS will be abbreviated.
(More MATWATCHING on Page 6)

MATWATCH

Page 6/Vol. 4, No. 30
July 29-Aug. 4

RATINGS RAP

Best Since April

WCW RALLIES BUT PTW TOPS

Whether a one-week fluke or a trend, WCW's two weekend afternoon shows emerged from the spring and early summer doldrums last weekend, though PRIME TIME WRESTLING posted its sixth consecutive Nielsen cable ratings win.

PTW took the week, despite a 7% drop from the previous week. Headlined by a Natural Disasters angle, PRIME TIME scored a 2.9 rating and 4.8 share of audience.

WCW MAIN EVENT, toplined by a Curtis Hughes-Yellow Dog bout, jumped to a 2.7/6.3, a 42% increase over the previous week but still down from a 2.9 on the same date last year. WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, meanwhile, posted its top numbers since April 20. Led by a Tom Zenk/Robert Gibson-Freebirds U.S. title showdown, WCW scored a 2.6/6.8, a 24% ratings gain over July 13 and its top share since February.

POWER HOUR gained 14% over its previous week to a 1.6. Last year on the same date, PH posted a 2.9 in a special Sunday prime time edition.

WWF ALL-AMERICAN took another slight plunge, dropping 5% over the previous episode and off 24% from last year.

CABLE

Week Ending July 22	Rating/Share	Homes	Year Ago
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 7/22)	2.9/4.8	1.65 million	3.0/5.0
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 7/21)	2.7/6.3	1.56 million	2.9/6.9
WCW WORLD CHAMP. (TBS 7/20)	2.6/6.8	1.49 million	2.7/6.9
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 7/21)	2.2/6.7	1.28 million	2.9/8.1
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 7/20)	1.6/8.1	903,000	2.9/6.3

MATWATCHING (From Page 5)

CAN YOU TOP THIS?: One scenario considered for the Aug. 25 U.S. tag tourney is a Dustin Rhodes-Nikita Koloff final. If so,

it would be prelude to a Dustin-Nikita series with Dear Ol' Dad and Uncle Ivan in respective corners. But others inside WCW are arguing the belt needs to go to Sting.

IN THREE RIVERS: At the Braves-Pirates game in Pittsburgh Wednesday night, two fans held up a big banner in the sixth inning reading: "TBS---BRING BACK RIC FLAIR!"

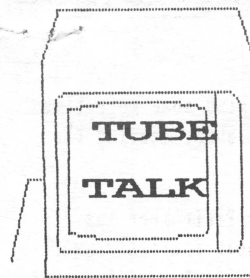
NEXT WEEK: Guest columns from Carlie Gill and Dr. Mike Lano and a review of the best and worst performances of midyear.

ONE YEAR AGO IN MATWATCH...

---WCW chief Jim Herd says he's tired of all the talk of Ole Anderson not pushing younger guys. "This is not going to be the Seniors Tour," said Herd.

---Kerry Von Erich goes to Titan as the Texas Tornado.

---A male fan attacks Kim Anthony on her way to the dressing room at the Mid-South Coliseum.



Steven DeTruth (Steve Prazak) debuted as color commentator on PW'91 Saturday and was a riot in an interview with GEORGIA ALL-STAR commish Gordon Clements....Jim Ross had open phones on THE JIM ROSS SHOW Sunday night with some positive feedback on a junior heavyweight division... IWF taped five more hours Saturday at Universal Studios. The hottest event was a Heartbreakers vs. Crocodile McKee/Caribbean Kid, in which Thunder & Lightning held one of the 'Breakers' leg for a pin. IWF "president" Will Henley asks fans to send in videotapes of the match when the original was "erased".... No, contrary to those who have called my answering machine, the Cornettes have not really had a family addition...Craig Johnson will miss the first night of the Global North American tourney for a long-committed date as the best man for his best friend's wedding. Joe Pedicino will sub for the first two rounds....IWF has its first house show next Monday night at the Orlando Fairgrounds....LPWA tapes at the Cobb County Civic Center in Marietta Sunday night....I still need help getting WCW WORLD WIDE results. WCW is negotiating to get on Channel 30 in Memphis but that won't be until September....Verne Langdon's SLAMMERS WRESTLING GYM has had some big play the last two weeks. Last week, a story on SLAMMERS made the ABC national newsfeed and Verne's place was profiled Wednesday morning on HBO's WORLD ENTERTAINMENT REPORT....Ross continued refreshingly frank comments on the steroid issue and the quality of some recent matches. On the debacle concerning the scaffold match at the BASH, one caller said: "Dusty Rhodes is a worse matchmaker than he was a wrestler".

SPECIAL THANKS

I want to thank the many, many of you who have sent get well wishes to the 1988 MATWATCHER OF THE YEAR Dan Gibson as he has recovered from his recent stroke. I'll be seeing him this weekend but I want you to know you have helped work a miracle. He is now walking again, even at times without the aid of a walker. When he received a card from a certain wrestling manager, Mr. G told his wife, "I can't stand him." Colleen said, "Dan, you don't mean that!" Said Mr. G: "That's the best compliment I can pay him."

Let's boost him all the way home. If you'd like, drop him a card in care of: DAN GIBSON, 2301 DOROTHY ST., WAYCROSS GA 31501. He is one of this country's biggest wrestling fans and one of the dearest people to me.

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